the first place in Spanish literature, had Cervantes not written his masterpiece. Its name became a byword, its passages were universally quoted, and its characters and action long served as model in an age when plagiarism was not yet a vice. In the words of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* it "caused the new theatre to make a gigantic step onwards. This astonishing novel taught the Spaniards the art of dialogue, and for the first time exhibited persons of all classes of Society speaking in harmony with their natural surroundings, thinking and acting in accordance with their condition of life".

Little was known about Fernando de Rojas, the author of this work, until the recent discovery of an Inquisitional record, which made it clear that be was a *converse*, i.e.,* a baptised Jew, hampered for that reason in the exercise of his profession and, to boot, married to the daughter of another *converso* who had been put on trial for Judaising.

The importance of *Celestina* in European literature, as has been indicated, was vast. But for our purpose it is enough to point out its influence on William Shakes-peare. Above all, it had a distinct share in the ancestry of *Borneo and Juliet,* who were, as a modern critic has put it, "own children" to Rojas' tragic lovers. Similarly, the "old bawd" who sustains the comic part foreshadows that most perfect of Shakespearian characters, Juliet's nurse.

The extent of the interaction of Jewish and other elements in European culture may be illustrated most conveniently from England ; all the more strikingly if we go back to the period of that astonishing renascence of letters under the Tudors, when Jews were virtually